Ray says he's identified man who set him up

PETROS, Tenn. (AP) — James Earl Ray, serving a 99-year sentence for killing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said Wednesday he has made positive identification of a photograph of the man he says set him up to take the blame for the civil rights leader's assassination.

Ray, who has said he is innocent of the King slaying, said the photograph was shown to him two or three months ago but he would not say who showed it to him. Ray's lawyer, Mark Lane, said it has not been decided whether to turn the photograph over to the U.S. House Assassinations Committee or to a judge.

Interviewed at Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary, Ray said the photo showed "Raoul," the man Ray says set him up to take the blame for the April 4, 1968, shooting of King in Memphis.

Ray says the man is a Latin with auburn hair, of medium height and build, and that he believes "Raoul" was an alias.

NO OFFICIAL investigation has ever confirmed "Raoul's" existence.

Ray also said author William Bradford Huie of Hartselle, Ala., offered him money and to arrange a pardon if he would confess. Huey wrote the book "He Slew the Dreamer" about Ray.

"About two or three months ago . . . Huie . . . contacted (Ray's former attorney) Jack Kershaw, and he offered him $200,000 to give me if I would take complete responsibility for the King case," Ray said.

"And in return he'd get a pardon for me from Gov. (Ray) Blanton and then they'd turn me loose and give me some type of a social job in Puerto Rico or somewhere," Ray added. "Kershaw told me about it. I really didn't believe it because it sounds too incredible so I told Mark Lane about it so he had my brother Jerry to call Huie, and Huie said, yes, he'd get me $200,000, he would get a pardon from Blanton, he knew how to do it."

Contacted by telephone, Huie said he had talked with Kershaw and Ray's brother, but that Ray's account of the conversations was wrong.

"ANY IDEA that I promised him a pardon is nonsense," Huie said. "I told him that the only chance Ray is going to get out of prison is if he now comes forward and he supplies any information that is missing that he has . . ."

Huie, in 1968, paid Ray for the rights to portray himself on film. Portrayal rights may be worth $175,000, Huie said, adding that he did not discuss a specific sum with Kershaw.